

Thornton Township High School District 205

Library Media Center Material Selection Policy

Objectives

Thornton Township High School District 205:

Instructional materials are selected by the school district to implement, enrich, and support the educational program for the student. Materials must serve both the breadth of the curriculum in addition to the needs and interests of individual students. The district is obligated to provide for a wide range of abilities and to respect the diversity of many differing points of view. To this end, principles must be placed above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality and appropriateness. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

Thornridge, Thornton, and Thornwood Library Media Centers:

The main objective of the selection procedure is to provide students with a wide range of educational materials that will enrich and support the curriculum on all levels of difficulty and in a variety of formats, with diversity of appeal, allowing for the presentation of many different points of view in order to meet the needs of the students and faculty served.

Responsibility for Selection

The elected Board of Education shall delegate to the Superintendent of Schools the authority and responsibility for selection of all print and non-print materials. Responsibilities for actual selection shall rest with appropriate professionally trained Library Media Center personnel who shall discharge this obligation consistent with the board's adopted selection criteria and procedures. Selection procedures shall involve representatives of the professional staff directly affected by the selections, and persons qualified by preparation to aid in wise selection.

Criteria

Library Media Staff members involved in selection of resource materials shall use the following criteria as a guide. Every item selected must meet one or more of the following standards for inclusion into the collection.

- Educational significance Contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interests of the students
- Favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
- Reputation and significance of the author, producer, and the publisher
- Validity, currency, and appropriateness of material

- Contribution the materials make to breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial issues
- High degree of potential user appeal
- High artistic quality and/or literary style
- Quality and variety of format
- Value commensurate with cost and/or need
- Timeliness or permanence
- Integrity

The following recommended lists shall be consulted in the selection of materials, but selection is not limited to their listings:

Bibliographies (latest editions available, including supplements)

- *American Historical Fiction*
- *The Best in Children's Books*
- *Children's Books*
- *Children's Catalog*
- *European Historical Fiction and Biography*
- *Guide to Sources in Educational Media*
- *Junior High School Catalog*
- *Reference Books for School Libraries*
- *Subject Guide to Children's Books in Print*
- *Westinghouse Learning Directory*

Current reviewing media

- *AASA Science Books and Films*
- *American Film & Video Association Evaluations*
- *Booklist*
- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*
- *Horn Book*
- *Kirkus Reviews*
- *School Library Journal*

The following criteria will be used as they apply:

1. Learning resources shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and district and the aims and objectives of individual schools and specific courses.
2. Learning resources shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
3. Learning resources shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
4. Physical format and appearance of learning resources shall be suitable for their

intended use.

5. Learning resources shall be designed to help students gain an awareness of our pluralistic society.
6. Learning resources shall be designed to motivate students and staff to examine their own duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make informed judgments in their daily lives.
7. Learning resources shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.
8. The selection of learning resources on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a diverse collection representing various views.
9. Learning resources shall clarify historical and contemporary forces by presenting and analyzing inter-group tension and conflict objectively, placing emphasis on recognizing and understanding social and economic problems.

The following kinds of material should be selected for the media center:

1. Materials integral to the instructional program.
2. Materials appropriate for the reading level and understanding of students in the school.
3. Materials reflecting the interests and needs of the students and faculty served by the media center.
4. Materials warranting inclusion in the collection because of their literary and/or artistic value and merit.
5. Materials presenting information with the greatest degree of accuracy and clarity possible.
6. Materials representing a fair and unbiased presentation of information. In controversial areas, the media specialist, in cooperation with the faculty, should select materials representing as many shades of opinion as possible, in order that varying viewpoints are available to students.

Criteria for the evaluation of works not directly related to curriculum requirements, such as works of the imagination for instance fiction; poetry and drama exhibit the following qualities:

- Representative of a significant trend, genre or culture
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic merit and literary value
- Authentic reflection of the human experience
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of historical or social setting

Gift Policy:

Thornton Township High School District 205 Library Media Centers accept gifts of materials but reserves the right to evaluate and dispose of them in accordance with the criteria applied to similar purchased materials.

Gift materials which are not in accord with Thornton Township High School District 205 Library Media Centers' objectives and policies will be disposed of in a manner deemed appropriate by the librarians.

No gift materials are accepted with stipulations. Thornton Township School District 205 Library Media centers will not make a commitment to keep any collection or group of books on a special shelf apart from other books in the library and reserves the right to inter-shelve gift materials with other materials on the same subject.

Cash donations cannot be accepted.

Books & Resource Materials:

FICTION

The fiction collections are a major component of Thornton Township High School District 205 Libraries. Classic literature and popular bestsellers comprise the core of the fiction collection. Its purpose is to both entertain and enrich human understanding by presenting stories in an imaginative way rather than in a factual manner.

Selections are based on one or more of the following criteria: quality (determined by reviews), potential use, and demand.

NON-FICTION

The non-fiction collection emphasizes timely, accurate, and useful informational materials to support curriculum and individual interests. Materials are available for all reading levels and are selected to represent a continuum of opinions and viewpoints when available.

As a new field emerges, the Thornton Township District 205 High School Library Media Centers attempt to respond with timely additions.

PERIODICALS & NEWSPAPERS

Periodicals are selected to supplement the book collection and to provide materials on current issues for curriculum, research and for general reading.

Thornton Township High School District 205 Library Media Centers also select newspapers of local, state, and national interest, depending on cost, the place of publication, the breadth of coverage and the degree of fulfillment of reference or recreational interests.

Intellectual Freedom:

Thornton Township High School District 205 Library Media Centers and the library staff will not, either directly or indirectly, ban or censor any materials.

The presence of an item in our library does not indicate any endorsement of its contents by Thornton Township High School District 205.

The libraries of Thornton Township High School District 205 hold censorship to be a purely individual matter and declare that, "while anyone is free to reject for himself/herself books and other materials of which he/she does not approve, he/she cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others".

Thornton Township High School District 205 Library Media Centers subscribe to and have adopted the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, the Freedom to

Read Statement and the Freedom to View Statement. These items are included in this Policy.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948. Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must

jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the*

efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. If these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best

that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the [First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States](#). In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed by the ALA Council January 10, 1990

Reconsideration of Materials

Should a student, staff member or parent question the place of a book or other material in the collection, this individual may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form to a librarian. This form is available at the circulation desk of the library.

The Thornton Township High School District 205 librarians will reevaluate the item to see if it meets our library's stated evaluative criteria and will review the selection decision to see if the item falls within the books and materials selection policy.

If the patron requests a written response, one will be provided by a librarian within fifteen business days from the submission of the request.

If the patron is not satisfied with the response, he/she may appeal to the building principal.

**THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 205
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

BOOK _____ MAGAZINE _____ OTHER (Specify) _____

Title _____

Author _____

Publisher (If Known) _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____ email address _____

Street Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zipcode _____

The following questions are to be answered after the complaint has read, viewed, or listened to the school library material in its entirety. If sufficient space is not provided, attach additional sheets. (Please sign your name to each additional attachment)

Note: For a complaint to be reviewed, all questions must be answered.

1. To what in the book or material do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages, chapters)

2. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material?

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading/viewing this material?

4. Did you read/view the entire material? _____

5. Is there anything positive about this material?

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this book/material by literary critics? _____

7. What would you like the library to do about this book/material?

_____ restrict its use to staff/adults

_____ withdraw it from all circulation

_____ have it reevaluation by library officials

8. In its place, what book or material of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the issue/theme?

Signature of Complainant

Date

Please return completed form to the school principal.

Resource Sharing

Thornton Township High School District 205 Library Media Centers' policy on resource sharing will reflect the needs of our patrons.

In meeting the curriculum requirements of staff and students, our library will participate in an interlibrary loan system. The system will primarily be comprised of the libraries in the district. We will share resources, including books, periodicals, journals, pamphlets and software. Through a common address book (electronic: part of our automation system), each library will browse not only their own collections, but also the collections of the other two libraries.

Reservations for materials outside the home library must be done through the circulation desk. Before any material is shipped from a library, it will be checked out to the borrowing patron via the district automation system. A database of all the patrons in the district will be kept current in this data station for this specific purpose. Materials will be transferred daily between the libraries through the district mail. Patrons wishing to use the interlibrary loan system will be advised that their requested materials will arrive at our library by 10:00 a.m. the next regular school day. Material will be held for three days. Unclaimed materials will have the reservations canceled and be returned to the issuing library.

The materials will be returned to our circulation desk and checked in as regular items will be circulated. Interlibrary loans will be allowed only to current patrons, both staff and students. No loans will be made to the public or to parents or to other family members. Loans made from or to other libraries will follow the guidelines set forth by the Suburban Library system Interlibrary Loan Policy.

Because interlibrary loans will be processed directly through our regular automation system, and all district patrons are kept current in the system, no special loan form will be needed to initiate the process.